

WaterTalk Newsletter

November 2000

In This Issue:

Remember the Past, Protect The Future: 30 Years of Environmental Progress
EPA Gets Green Award
EPA Grants Support Local Schools: Applications Due!
Help for Environmental Ed Grant Applicants
Poster Shows Estuaries
Unleaded Kids: Poster Highlights Health Issue
Small Hands Help Build A Better Planet: Children and the Environment
Clean Water Action Plan Update
-Policy for Watersheds on Federal Lands: Final
-Citizens Aim for Sustainable Future
Industrial Storm Water Program News
Homeowner Guide Gives Clean Water Tips
Workshops to Assist Small Communities on Water Issues
EPA's Boat Fleet Used for Key Environmental Work
Beneficial Landscaping? EPA Region 10 Website Available!
Calendar

EPA NEWS

Remember the Past, Protect The Future Region 10 Reports on 30 Years of Environmental Progress

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency was established thirty years ago as the country was becoming more aware of our dependence on the natural world. In the past three decades, rivers have become cleaner, skies clearer, and our approach to addressing problems more holistic. EPA Region 10 employees are working to continue this progress in partnerships with the citizens and state and local governments of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington and hundreds of tribes.

A new booklet highlighting 30 years of environmental progress in the Pacific Northwest is now available from EPA. Called **Remember the Past, Protect the Future**, this 30-page report provides a status report on efforts to achieve clean air, clean water, clean land, and healthy communities and ecosystems. It also discusses the agency's international efforts and discusses challenges for the next century.

Future issues of WaterTalk will feature excerpts from the report. For a free copy, call EPA's Public Environmental Resource Center at 206/553-1200 or 1-800-424-4372. For an on-line version, visit www.epa.gov/r10earth and click on the report's cover.

EPA Gets Green Award

It's not uncommon for EPA to recognize and award outstanding environmental performers. But it is uncommon for EPA to *receive* such an award! In an unusual turn of tables, EPA Region 10 accepted an award plaque in a ceremony last month from Climate Solutions, a nonprofit organization based in Olympia, Washington.

EPA Region 10 received this honor in recognition of the agency's work to get in front of the curve on issues of purchasing green power and using alternative energy sources at its facilities. Climate Solutions has challenged government agencies to do just this. EPA Region 10, seeking to help tip the market place in favor of renewable energy, was the first to meet their challenge and the first to receive this award.

At its Manchester Laboratory in Kitsap County, EPA has installed solar panels generating 2100 watts of photovoltaic capacity. Remaining lab power requirements are met with "green electricity"---wind power from Wyoming. EPA grant dollars support the provision of the lab with the output of a 700 kilowatt wind turbine. The Region 10 lab is the first EPA facility in the country to use a "virtual buy" of green power. In this model, a premium was paid to the Bonneville Environmental Foundation so that they could construct the new wind capacity in Wyoming.

For more information, call Carolyn Gangmark, EPA, at 206/553-4072 or 1-800-424-4372 x4072, or email gangmark.carolyn@epa.gov.

photo caption: Photovoltaic solar panels at EPA's Manchester Lab turn to track the sun for maximum power.

TOOLS

You'll notice a theme here! This issue of WaterTalk pays special attention to environmental education and children.

EPA Grants Support Local Schools Applications Due!

Environmental Education Grant applications are due November 15! This annual grant program gives financial support to projects that increase the public's awareness and knowledge about the environment, and provide skills to make informed decisions and take responsible action.

Now that the new school year is well underway, some educators in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska are beginning to utilize \$100,000 in EPA grants awarded in the last round of funding. EPA awarded thirteen grants to local organizations, government agencies, schools, and universities. Projects include a farm and ecology student program, beach caretaking and education, watershed monitoring, a "Groundwater Detectives" program, a program called "Turning Middle School Students into 'Real' Marine Scientists," and many others.

Application information is available on the EPA website at www.epa.gov/r10earth. Or, call Sally Hanft, EPA at 206/553-1207 or 1-800-424-4372, or email hanft.sally@epa.gov.

Help for Environmental Ed Grant Applicants: To obtain any of the following resource documents, call Sally Hanft at 206/553-1207.

- Environmental Education Grant Program: Tips for Developing Successful Grant Applications
- Environmental Education Grant Profiles
- Grant Funding for Your Environmental Education Program: Strategies and Options
- Grant preparation tutorial: www.epa.gov/seahome/grants/src/grant.htm

Poster Shows Estuaries

A new EPA poster is now available from Region 10. Called **Estuaries: Scenes of Transition**, this 38" x 25 ½" poster depicts some of the geographic and biological diversity in United States estuaries. Estuaries are places where the land meets the sea and where freshwater mixes with salty oceans. These ecosystems are among the world's most biologically diverse and productive. This striking and colorful poster includes a key to help identify the fifty species shown. Great for the classroom. Suitable for framing. For more information about estuaries and how to protect them, visit www.epa.gov/owow/estuaries. For a free copy of the poster, call EPA's Public Environmental Resource Center at 206/553-1200 or 1-800-424-4372.

Unleaded Kids: Poster Highlights Health Issue

Runs Better Unleaded is the title of a poster produced by EPA's Lead Awareness Program. Lead is recognized as one of the most significant environmental health threats to American children. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that almost 1,000,000 American children under the age of six have elevated blood lead levels. According to the American Association of Pediatrics, lead can damage the brain and nervous system, and even a low level of lead exposure can cause learning disabilities, hearing loss, speech, language and behavior problems, and other serious health effects. Current studies suggest that the primary sources of lead exposure for most children are deteriorating lead-based paint, lead contaminated dust, and lead contaminated residential soil. To help highlight this issue, this 18" x 22" poster shows color photographs of kids in action, and gives a phone number and web site to learn more about preventing lead poisoning (www.epa.gov/lead). For a free copy, call EPA's Public Environmental Resource Center at 206/553-1200 or 1-800-424-4372.

Small Hands Help Build a Better Planet: Children and the Environment

Kids across the country are demonstrating that they care about the environment, and actively getting involved. They are participating in fun events which help increase awareness about environmental problems and planning what to do about them. Some of the things they are doing include hands-on work on watersheds and wetlands, helping design classroom study materials and field studies, and

wading into the ocean for shoreline surveys. Here are snapshots about many programs and resources that can help local youth get involved.

Adopt-A-Watershed. This curriculum uses local watersheds as living laboratories for learning. Students in grades K-12 work within their communities to learn about the geology, plants, and animals in their local watershed. Understanding how a watershed works can help them to begin understanding the interrelationships among living things. The program provides teacher training and resources to tailor the program to local community needs and the appropriate grade level. For more information, visit Adopt-A-Watershed's website at www.adopt-a-watershed.org, or contact their national office at 415/541-9657.

Environmental Education Clearinghouse. The Environmental Education Clearinghouse is a service offered through EPA Region 10 to help connect classroom teachers and informal educators with those who have information, materials, and resources. The clearinghouse can help locate information on training, publications, grants, curricula, videos, teaching kits, and speakers. Call toll free 1-800-424-4372 or 206/553-1200 during regular business hours.

Give Water A Hand. This successful youth watershed education program was crafted by the University of Wisconsin. Organizations like the USDA, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and EPA help support this program. Step-by-step action guides and more information are available at 1-800-WATER20, or visit the Give Water A Hand website at www.uwex.edu/erc

Kid's Stuff. EPA's Office of Water has a "Kid's Stuff" web site which offers projects, art, and experiments to involve kids and students in environmental protection. The site uses word games to increase water conservation vocabulary, provides step-by-step instructions for building an aquifer, and contains funny water-issues-related cartoons. It also links to other environmental sites for kids. You can find "Kid's Stuff" at <http://www.epa.gov/OW/kids.html>

EPA's Office of Environmental Education website. This site -- www.epa.gov/enviroed -- seeks to increase environmental literacy, and contains information on grants, educator training, student fellowships, and long-standing environmental education programs and partnerships.

Water Science for Schools. U.S. Geological Survey has a "Water Science for Schools" web site that allows you to become a "city planner" in charge of an imaginary city. The site also includes pictures, data, maps, and lots of water science projects. It's located at wwwga.usgs.gov/edu/.

Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment. Also known as GLOBE, this web site can be found at globe.fsl.noaa.gov. It combines the efforts of students, teachers, and scientists in studying and understanding the global environment. Students can have fun logging onto the GLOBE atmosphere/climate study site and taking daily readings of temperature, cloud coverage, and rainfall. Students report this data to NOAA, and provide scientists with reliable temperature and precipitation data that, for many regions in the world, has been sparse.

Explorer's Club. This EPA website allows kids ages 5-12 to explore their environment and learn about things they can do to protect it. It offers games, pictures, stories, and other fun things. Check it out at www.epa.gov/kids.

Other Useful Web Sites.

EPA Region 10's Homepage: www.epa.gov/r10earth

Children's Health Protection website: www.epa.gov/children

EPA's Environmental Education Center: www.epa.gov/teachers

WATERWORDS

Clean Water Action Plan Update

Federal agencies developed the **Clean Water Action Plan** in 1998 to help revitalize the commitment to our nation's water resources. This comprehensive initiative is giving us cleaner water by strengthening public health protections, targeting watershed protection efforts at priority areas, and providing communities with new resources to control polluted runoff and enhance natural resources stewardship. For details, visit www.cleanwater.gov, or www.epa.gov/r10earth/cleanwater.htm. Or, contact the regional Clean Water Action Plan coordinator, Bevin Reid, at 206/553-1566 or 1-800-424-4372 x1566.

Policy for Watersheds on Federal Lands: Final

The **Unified Federal Policy**---a policy to unify federal efforts to protect water quality on federal lands---is now final. Published October 18, the policy provides a framework for better coordination among federal agencies, states, Tribes, private landowners, and other interested stakeholders in the management of federal lands and resources. It promotes management of federal lands on a watershed basis to protect water quality and the health of aquatic ecosystems. Federal agencies will closely coordinate with stakeholders to develop implementation plans that incorporate the policy's goals and build on current efforts, while recognizing work already being accomplished. The draft was published for public comment in February. Listening sessions, including one in Portland, Oregon, were held around the country to discuss the proposal. The Policy is a key action of the Clean Water Action Plan. For more information, visit www.cleanwater.gov/ufp or call Mike Lohrey, US Forest Service, at 503/808-2902, or Trish Carroll, US Forest Service, at 208/331-5910.

Citizens Aim for Sustainable Future

Hundreds of citizens in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho participated recently in **Regional Watershed Roundtables**. With an eye toward "creating a sustainable future for fish, water, and people," the citizens spent two intensive days building consensus, crafting watershed solutions, learning skills, and sharing successes. A set of recommendations for future actions emerged. The recommendations will be featured at the National Watershed Forum in 2001. They include:

- increasing public education and outreach on watershed issues,
- building better mechanisms for collaboration within watersheds, such as professional facilitation,
- creating a common vision for sustaining watersheds among various groups, and

-increasing awareness of the variety of funding mechanisms and watershed groups' ability to leverage these funds.

photo caption: Citizens gather at Roundtables to craft watershed solutions.

Washington State University Center for Sustaining Natural Resources sponsored the three roundtables. Summary reports from these meetings will be available on their web site at: www.wsu/csanr.org and on the EPA Region 10 Clean Water Action Plan webpage at: www.epa.gov/r10earth/cleanwater.htm. For more information, contact Don Neslon, WSU, at 509/335-2922, or Bevin Reid, EPA, at 206/553-1566 or email reid.bevin@epa.gov.

In conjunction with the Roundtables, Funding Workshops were held by the Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University and University of Maryland. Attendees learned about working with watershed stakeholders to leverage restoration and protection funding. EPA and other agencies within the Regional Watershed Coordinating Team are looking into sponsoring more of these workshops so stay tuned for details.

Industrial Storm Water Program News

Industrial Permit Reissued: EPA's Multi-Sector General Permit (MSGP) for storm water discharges from industrial activities is due to be reissued in late October 2000. At press time, the permit had not yet appeared in the *Federal Register*. This new version of the MSGP is substantially reorganized and easier to understand and implement.

In the Pacific Northwest, the reissued MSGP applies to various industrial activities in all areas of Idaho, on tribal lands in Oregon, and on federal and tribal lands in Washington. In Alaska, the MSGP will be reissued later this fall and effective in February 2001. (In Washington and Oregon, the permitting program is run by the state environmental agencies, not EPA.)

"No Exposure" Exclusion from Permitting: EPA's Phase II storm water regulations allow that discharges currently covered under the MSGP (or an individual storm water permit issued by EPA) may now be eligible for exclusion from permitting requirements. If a facility operator can certify that there is "no exposure" of industrial materials or processes to precipitation or runoff, MSGP permit coverage is not required for storm water discharges from that facility. "No exposure" means that the facility conducts all of its industrial activities indoors or under cover, and stores/uses its industrial materials indoors or under cover.

EPA has developed the *Guidance Manual for Conditional Exclusion from Storm Water Permitting Based on "No Exposure" of Industrial Activities to Storm Water* to assist in determining if a facility qualifies for the exclusion. This document is available at <http://www.epa.gov/owmitnet/sw/industry/noxguide.pdf>

EPA Region 10 has notified existing permitted facilities of the MSGP reissuance and the procedures for maintaining permit coverage, as well as the opportunity to be excluded from the permit requirements. If you have questions, contact Misha Vakoc, Region 10's Storm Water

Coordinator, at 800-424-4372, x6650; email: vakoc.misha@epa.gov.

Homeowner Guide Gives Clean Water Tips

Recipes for Clean Water: A Homeowner's Stormwater Survival Guide is a cookbook of recipes for cleaning up stormwater, published by the Clean Water Task Force in Minnesota. Chapters with catchy titles like "The End of Lawns as We Mow Them: Landscaping to Eliminate Runoff" and "Pet Peeves - See Spot Spot" explain the impacts of nonpoint source pollution from our homes and yards and provide tips on how to reduce them. Although the 116-page book was targeted for Minnesota residents, its recipes can be used anywhere.

In the chapter titled "BMPs - Home Recipes for Clean Water," you'll find a recipe for Stormwater Supreme. It calls for 1 quart best management practices, natural household cleaners, one 5-ft by 5-ft compost heap, 1/3 gallon paint savvy, 1 cup construction precaution, and a dash of reduce, reuse, repair, and recycle. For a copy (\$14.90), contact author Bill Boudreau at 612/825-0979 or cremboudreau@uswest.net. (*Article adapted from Nonpoint Source News-Notes, July 2000.*)

SPOTLIGHT

Workshops to Assist Small Communities on Water Issues

A heads up! Are you a mayor, a city councillor, a public works director of a small community? If so, you, like most others, are probably frustrated with the complexity of state and federal environmental regulations of your drinking water and wastewater facilities...and the lack of funds to comply with them.

Help is on the way. Starting in early 2001, over a dozen workshops will be held across Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. The workshops are designed to inform you about funding possibilities for small communities and to help you understand recent regulatory changes. But perhaps most important, participants will have the opportunity to receive hands-on assistance with the actual projects and problems facing their communities.

Participants will be encouraged to bring real life problems to the workshops so that they can walk away with more than just another "how to" manual. *The goal of these workshops is to provide on-the-ground technical assistance to those who come prepared.*

The US Environmental Protection Agency has awarded a grant to run the workshops to Northwest Small Cities Services, a non-profit organization dedicated to assisting small communities. Dates and times for the workshops will be published in the next edition of WaterTalk.

Questions? Contact Jack Collins, Northwest Small Cities Services, 206/524-7482, or Dan Phalen, EPA Region 10, Office of Ecosystems and Communities, toll free 1-800-424-4372 or at phalen.dan@epa.gov.

EPA's Boat Fleet Used for Key Environmental Work

photo caption: EPA gets environmental work done aboard the **Monitor**, one of many EPA sampling vessels.

Did you know that EPA R10's Manchester Laboratory has a small fleet of boats used for environmental sampling? These boats are owned by the U.S. government, housed at the Lab in Kitsap County, Washington, and used throughout the Region. EPA's Office of Environmental Assessment maintains and operates the boats.

The largest boat is a 28-foot inboard/outboard work boat called the "Monitor." The EPA Dive Team regularly uses it for sampling and other environmental work, including inspecting under fish net pens and checking on the safety of the sediment cap at Eagle Harbor. The Monitor is equipped with a dredging device that can be used to collect samples up to 300 feet below the water's surface.

A 17-foot Boston whaler is used for hydrographic and bathymetric studies. An 18-foot river boat has a jet outdrive which allows it to go into shallow waters. It has been used to take sediment samples for EPA's Superfund program, the Water Program, and other programs.

Perhaps one of the most unique boats is the "electro-fishing" vessel. This boat contains a device which uses an electric current to stun fish, which enables workers to collect tissue samples. These tissues are tested for contaminants which help scientists trace the path of hazardous substances through the food chain. The electro-fishing boat is also used to access the fish populations in lakes and rivers around Region 10. It can also be used to determine length and weight measurements of selected target species for various types of studies.

In addition to these larger boats, the Lab also houses a 15-foot Zodiac, a permanently-inflated vessel used by the Dive Team on monitoring and inspecting missions. This boat is currently on loan to EPA's Coeur d'Alene office to take samples in the Coeur d'Alene Basin in Idaho. Several smaller inflatable boats and rowboats are taken to streams and ponds for sediment sampling and other wetlands work.

For more information about the EPA boat fleet, call Andy Hess of the Manchester Lab, at 360/871-8711 or email hess.andy@epa.gov.

ECOSYSTEM

Beneficial Landscaping? EPA Region 10 Website Now Available!

We invite you to explore the new **EPA Region 10 website on Beneficial Landscaping** at www.epa.gov/r10earth/bl.htm. It serves as a resource clearinghouse on beneficial landscaping in the Northwest and Alaska, in order to serve your needs for information about beneficial

landscaping and to help you engage in its practice.

The website features an introduction to beneficial landscaping as well as articles on specific topics. The website's key feature is the cross-referenced listing of, and links to, organizations that are engaged in aspects of beneficial landscaping within our 4-state region of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. It also links to key national organizations. In addition, there is a listing of demonstration gardens throughout the Region, which are listed according to the ecological regions within which they are found.

While the website is still being refined, the rudiments are in place and should be useful. More information will be added over time and we ask that viewers help us by letting us know of organizations and/or demonstration gardens that should appear on the website. We also welcome your suggestions and ideas for improvement. Contact Elaine Somers, EPA Region 10 Beneficial Landscaping, at 206/553-2966 or 1-800-424-4372 x2966, or email Somers.Elaine@epa.gov.

CALENDAR

November

6-9: Ridgetop to Ridgetop, Conservation Districts and Watershed Councils Working Together, Eugene, OR. Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, 503/986-0178, www.oweb.state.or.us

7: Drinking Water Seminar 2001, Yakima, WA. Washington Environmental Training Center, www.ivygreen.ctc.edu/wetrc, 1-800-562-0858 or 253/833-9111 x3369.

9-11: American Indian Science and Engineering Society National Conference, Portland, OR. Susan Gibson, 303/772-7062 or 505/765-1052.

27-28: Government Takings, Seattle, WA. Law Seminars International, www.lawseminars.com, 206/621-1938.

December

2: Happy 30th Birthday, EPA! December 2, 1970.

January

15: Deadline for contributions to the February 2001 issue of WaterTalk Newsletter. Andrea Lindsay, Editor, 206/553-1896, 1-800-424-4372, lindsay.andrea@epa.gov.

#####

WaterTalk is published each February, May, August, and November by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10. WaterTalk seeks to be a useful tool for those who protect water

resources and ecosystems in communities of the Greater Pacific Northwest, by providing practical resources and relevant agency news.

You are invited to contribute items for publication. Submittal deadline is the 15th day of the month before publication. WaterTalk articles can be used in other publications. Please give credit to WaterTalk.

For mailing changes, call Tomi Rutherford at 206/553-0603. To contact the editor, call Andrea Lindsay at 206/553-1896 or 1-800-424-4EPA x1896, or email lindsay.andrea@epa.gov. Assistant Editor, Debra Packard, can be reached at 206/553-0247 or 1-800-424-4EPA x0247.

Accessibility information: To request services to accommodate persons with disabilities, contact EPA at 206/553-1200 or 1-800-424-4EPA.

Mention of trade names, products, or services does not convey, and should not be interpreted as conveying, official EPA approval, endorsement, or recommendation.

#####